

Thursday 8 August 2019

Citizens to help set Sydney's agenda to 2050

Invitations have been sent to 15,000 random households, as the City of Sydney seeks 50 everyday people to take part in a citizens' jury that will help shape the future of Sydney to 2050.

The citizens' jury will consider ideas for action provided by the community and recommend top ideas to be included in the City's new long-term plan, Sydney 2050. This plan will guide the City's major decisions over the coming decades.

Jury members will discuss big ideas put forward by the community and other stakeholders and make recommendations directly to Lord Mayor Clover Moore at a special event in December.

The City is partnering with newDemocracy, a leading foundation working in citizen participation, to design and oversee the jury process. The jury will be made up of 50 randomly selected citizens who live, work or visit the city.

The Lord Mayor heralded the citizens' jury as a major step forward in public participation in City of Sydney decision making, and said she looked forward to working with a cross-section of the community.

"We place enormous importance on hearing from our community to help guide our decisions," the Lord Mayor said.

"15,000 households in the City of Sydney and metropolitan Sydney have been sent an invitation to apply for our citizens' jury. The final 50 jury members will be selected by newDemocracy in an independent and random selection process.

"The citizens' jury will make recommendations to Council on which ideas should be in our new long-term plan for action.

"Jury members will discuss big ideas sent in by the public and developed through workshops we held with our communities and businesses.

"Consultation for Sustainable Sydney 2030 more than a decade ago sparked great ideas such as providing the light rail in central Sydney, stormwater recycling and revitalising underused spaces like city laneways and the former Paddington Reservoir.

"These projects are now transforming the city, and we want to come up with the next set of ideas that will shape Sydney in decades to come.

"We want our plan to accurately reflect the aspirations and ideas of our community, so Council can deliver the projects we know our residents, workers, businesses and visitors want.

Sydney2030/Green/Global/Connected

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“I’m excited about working with the citizens’ jury to help us decide the big ideas to shape our vision for Sydney in 2050.”

The newDemocracy Foundation has run similar public participation projects across the country.

“All governments face the challenge of having large numbers of people never getting involved because they think the decision is already made,” newDemocracy’s executive director, Iain Walker, said.

“We’re hopeful that this simple and transparent structure of having people’s ideas judged by a jury of randomly selected people from all walks of life will prove to people this is really worth their time.

“The second challenge we want to address is giving governments feedback that goes beyond public opinion and shows public judgment and common ground.

“It’s nice to offer creative ideas, but it’s even better to see if a community given the time to think, question and explore the trade-offs involved is supportive – and on what terms. That’s what this process should deliver for the City of Sydney.”

The citizens’ jury process starts on Saturday 24 August at Sydney Town Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend as observers to see how the process works.

To submit an idea to be considered by the citizens’ jury, visit sydneyyoursay.com.au

For media inquiries or images, contact Keeley Irvin.
Phone 0448 005 718 or email kirvin@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

For interviews with Lord Mayor Clover Moore, contact Matthew Phillips.
Phone 0436 817 973 or email mrphillips@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

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